RNA FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW Neighborhood Association

March,1992

232 Ogden Avenue - Jersey City, N.J. 07307 - (201) 798-0493

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION OR ELECTED OFFICIAL

REHEARING OF INDUSTRIAL VARIANCE FOR 210 OGDEN AVENUE

On March 5th, the Board of Adjustment heard testimony on the offically reopened hearings for the variance that was extended to the stone and marble factory located at 210 Ogden Avenue on January 31, 1991. The neighborhood has steadfastly opposed the operation of this industrial business in their residential community. Attorney Robert DuVal represented the community before the Board. Linda Rubino, Marie Lannie, Barbara Ipsaro, Elena Mastro, Micheal Cioffi and Vito Brunetti of Ogden Avenue testified under oath. Gary Bakirtjy, an Jersey City architect and planner, testified as the community's expert witness. Tom Hart also testified on behalf of the neighborhood.

Photographs, depicting the dangerous operations that frequently occur on the public sidewalk and street, were entered into evidence. These pictures showed the Rodriquez brothers, owners of this business, unloading 5' X 12' slabs of marble from a 30' flatbed truck with an industrial hy-lo vehicle that blocked the public sidewalk. In essence, the Rodriquezs have transformed that part of Odgen Avenue into an illegal loading zone. The daily use of their own flatbed truck blocks the street and ties up traffic as it angles into their garage. Other trucks either delivering or picking up items for this factory frequently drive against the one way traffic on Ogden Avenue from Franklin Street. All this activity blocks and trespasses on the driveway of 208 Ogden Avenue everyday.

All of this illegal activity occurs because this business cannot operate within its own property lines or the garage building. This business should never have been allowed to begin operating in this residential neighborhood. It properly belongs in an industrial park in another part of Jersey City. The Board is rehearing this variance because of a request from Councilman Waddleton to reopen the case.

Arthur Glatman, Joe Mizzi's attorney, put on quite a show at this hearing trying to stop the neighborhood from testifying but was usually overruled. Joe Mizzi, is the owner of the property at 210 Ogden Avenue and has a lease-sale agreement with the Rodriquez brothers, which was evidently based on their ability to legally operate this industrial work out of the building. The Board recessed the hearing till April 23rd, when there will be a summing up by both sides.

There is also a pending law suit, brought by the neighborhood, against the Board in Superior Court for their initial approval of this variance.

RNA OPPOSES CHRIST HOSPITAL'S PARKING LOT

[On February 25th, the Planning Board approved Christ Hospital's plan for additional parking. It was opposed by nearly all the local people in the surrounding neigborhood. RNA voted to support the local community against this project. The following is the statement that RNA secertary Maria Tuzzo made at the Board hearing.]

At our February 14th meeting, RNA voted unanimously to support the position of the Palisade Avenue residents and oppose the Christ Hospital on-site parking plan. RNA is one of the neighborhood associations closest to the Prospect Street and Ogden Avenue site. It also recognizes the good that the Hospital has done for the community and its residents.

RNA's position has always been one of concern for the local environment, especially the quality of our air. Our community is already overburdened with excessive traffic that uses our area as a thoroughfare to New York via the Holland and Lincoln Tunnels. Any plan that will increase this traffic and the resulting pollution cannot be in our best interests.

We are not alone in this opinion. The Jersey City Environmental Commission has also expressed concerns regarding this plan and its adverse impact on the neighborhood. RNA is also in agreement with the Regional Plan Association's position to keep the Palisades free of

COMING EVENTS

1) **RNA MEETING:**
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, at 7:30 PM
AT THE HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE CENTER:

ANNUAL ELECTION OF THE RNA OFFICERS
(see nominees on the back page)

2) **Christ Hospital's proposal for parking lot**
City Council: March 11th, 5:00 pm: City Hall

3) **Board of Adjustment hearing : 210 Ogden Avenue**
Thursday, April 23 : 6:00 pm at City Hall

construction and preserve them as open space.

Therefore, we urge you to reject this plan for surface parking, that is surely a fore-runner for a multi-level structure. This project jeopardizes the preservation of open space and increases the dangers of air pollution.

[This parking plan is contingent upon the City Council approving an ordinance to vacate two City streets: Ogden Avenue and Prospect Street and giving them tax-free to Christ Hospital. Therefore it is necessary to convince the City Council to defeat this ordinance. As we go to print, there is a definite possibility that the first reading of that ordinance will be on Wednesday, March 11th at City Hall. RNA urges all interested parties to confirm this by calling the City Clerk at 547-5089 and then attending the meeting on March 11th to protest this action.]

MEETING MINUTES

The February meeting of RNA was chaired by Vito Brunetti. The first order of business was updates on several continuing concerns of the neighborhood: the rehearing of the variance for 210 Ogden Avenue and the impending renovation of Riverview Park.

The nominations for the annual election of RNA officers was officially opened. Nominations will remain open till the end of the March 13th meeting, at which time the election of the officers will be held. (For the names of the nominated individuals see the back page.)

Members of the Palisade Avenue community adjacent to Christ Hospital came to solicit our support in their struggle against the Hospital's plans to extend their parking facilities. Barbara Petrie, Terri Constantino and Tim Griffith explained to our group their opposition to this latest proposal for a new surface parking lot and the vacating of two City streets. There was a general discussion about this proposal and its negative impact on the air quality and the open space on the Palisades. There was also grave concern about the propriety of the closing down of two city streets and giving them to the Hospital: in effect, taking them off the tax rolls. RNA voted unanimously to support the community and speak before the Planning Board meeting on Februaruy 25th.

We then had the 50/50 drawing and ended the meeting with homemade, Valentine refreshments made by our members.

Please join us at our next meeting on March 13th, at 7:30 pm at the Harbor View for our annual RNA elections.

Maria Tuzzo, Secretary

UPDATE: Ascension Church

(excerpts of an announcment from George Swanson, rector of the Church)

Thanks to you all! The basement of the old church is almost ready for worship and community events. We celebrate our first Euchariat and Neighborhood Party in the Rebuilt Parish Hall on Sunday March 1st.

Help! We're growing! We need the gift or loan of folding chairs. Also....toilets, bathroom sinks, doors, sheetrock, insulation, electric cable and boxes etc., pressure treated lumber for the floor, paint...you name it.

If interested in helping, please call 963-8819. The Ascension Church is located on the corner of New York Avenue and South Street.

[RNA has also accepted the invitation of the Church to hold its May 8th meeting at the Church to support the efforts of the congregation in rebuilding this important community meeting place.]

It is thanks in part to the members of RNA that Ascension has been reopened for community use. Both individually and as an organization your members have been a part of the rebuilding team.

Naturally we are pleased that you and other community groups can use this space again.

God bless the Riverview Neighborhood Association and all the people of the Heights.

CONRAD'S CORNER

Now that Jersey City has hit the jackpot with the highest tax rate of any city in the United States, we hear reports that taxes will have to be raised again. With homeowners loosing their houses all over town, how about having a tenant tax in rent ceiling buildings. They are very much in the majority and should share in the increased costs of running the City.

The owners of one and two family houses are losing them because they are saddled with mortgage payments having twenty percent higher valuation than their real value.

If the owners are senior citizens and on a fixed income, they are not able to pay any increase in taxes and could lose their property. At the same time tenants on a rent ceiling are living high on the hog and are not even aware and, in most cases don't even are, that the City is going bankrupt, they can just move away.

Since property owners cannot go on a tax strike if they have a mortgage, they just walk away from their property when they are not able to pay taxes, causing another increase in taxes for the remaining taxpayers.

If we fire some 20 percent of our out-of-town workers, now estimated to be almost 50% of the work force, we would not have to resort to a rent tax. If this is not done the State may have to take over because there will be so few homeowners left to pay taxes. (In fact: only three councilmen own their own homes.) We just about got communism or the equivalent through the back door now, all the while we salute the American flag at the beginning of each council meeting as if everything is just hunky-dorry before the Punch & Judy show begins.

A PERSONAL OPINION:

We all sat back and watched the unbelieveable spectacle of the last several months unfold before us. First, our mayor, the highest municipal official of Jersey City, was convicted of federal charges of fraud and tax evasion perpetrated in between his two terms as mayor. Jersey City has been set back almost twenty years as a city known for its corruption and "politics for sale" mentality. Every positive effort to change our city into a developing business and commercial center and residential community was shattered by the very man who was instrumental in orchestrating that change. God only knows what kind of example has been set for the future generations of this City who might have thought about careers in the public service. We were already being overwhelmed by crime and drugs and violence

and unemployment and high taxes and low morale. Then this.....

But, as bad as that was, we were further horrified as we watched the remainder of our City Administration try to pick itself up and carry on the business of running the City. For the last several weeks we were unwilling spectators to the "business as usual" politics of the City Council. They had the important job of picking an interim mayor - a person to lead us "out of the wilderness'. Instead, what we witnessed was the most embarrassing display of selfish, non-civic manipulations by these guardians of government. Councilmembers had the audacity to nominate themselves because they were only thinking of their own ego-centered selves. The rumors were rampant of back room deals and promises of who would get what if who voted for who. No where in any of the press or public dialogue was there ANY MENTION of what the public wanted or more important.....what would be in the best interests of the ordinary citizen.

It's too early to determine what should be done to help ourselves heal and begin anew. But one thing is certain, this entire pack of "servants" should not be re-elected. Let's begin again at the next election with an entirely new group of people.....who will hopefully put the needs and concerns of the citizenry before their own selfish desires.

Vito Brunetti

A PROPOSAL TO EXTEND RNA BOUNDARIES

A proposal to change the current boundaries of the Riverview Neighborhood Association was made at the January meeting. The current boundaries, in which a member must live in order to have voting privileges, are Cuneo Place to the south, Bowers Street to the north, Palisade Avenue to the west and Ogden Avenue to the east. The new boundaries that are being proposed would be Prospect Street to the south, Congress Street to the north and New York Avenue to the west.

Since this proposal will change our present constitution, it is necessary to comply with the constitutional provision defining amendments. "This constitution may be altered, amended,or repealed, by a two thirds majority vote of all of the members of the organization. After an amendment has been proposed, it shall be published in the next two consecutive issues of the RNA newsletter. It shall not be voted upon until the second meeting after it is first proposed."

This is the second reading of the proposal. If you have an opinion and wish to discuss this proposal, please attend the March 13th meeting.

GUEST SPEAKERS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

We are arranging for guest speakers for our next few meetings. RNA has contacted the new Hudson County Prosecutor Carmen Messano to come and talk about the problems of crime and drugs and the efforts of local enforcement. We are specifically interested in his ideas of "community policing."

Marty Robbins of the NJ Transit Waterfront Transportation Office has also been invited to update us on the proposed light rail system for the waterfront and the possibility of extending it into the Heights.

HEIGHTS COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

HCRC will have Freeholder Arnold Bettinger as its quest speaker on Monday April 6, 1992. The meeting will begin at 7:30 pm at the North District Police Station, 282 Central Avenue (the corner of Central Avenue and Hutton Street). After the speaker, Captain Shamburg will address the complaints and problems of the community.

JERSEY CITY MUSEUM

WORKSHOPS AND CLASSES

SATURDAY:

1)SCHERENSCHNITTE WORKSHOP (traditional German art of papercutting) : 1 session - March 28th (1-4 pm)

2) QUILTING : 4 classes - March 28, April 4, 11, 25 (10 am to 12 pm)

3) CERAMIC SCULPTURE CLASS: 6 classes - May 9, 16, 23, 30, June 13, 20 (1:30 to 4 pm)

4) INTRODUCTION TO WATERCOLOR: 6 classes - May 9, 16, 23, 30, June 13, 20 (10 am to 12:30 pm)

5) SPECIAL FAMILY PROGRAM: BOUND TOGETHER (work with your child to design a personal momento book - scheduled to coincide with Mother's and Father's Day this spring): 3 classes - April 4, May 2, June 13 (1- 3 pm)

WEDNESDAY:

FIGURE DRAWING: 10 sessions - March 4 through May 6 (5:45 to 7:45 pm)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, call 547-4514

HELP SUPPORT RNA

Don't forget to pay your annual membership dues for 1992. It only costs $3.00 a year to enjoy the benefits of joining Riverview Neighborhood Association.

Official membership entitles people living within RNA's boundaries to voting privileges on all matters that are brought before the association at the monthly general meetings. For people living outside the area, membership dues entitle them to receive the RNA monthly newsletter and attend the monthly meetings as active non-voting participants.

Make your check payable to Riverview Neighborhood Assn. and mail it to 232 Ogden Avenue, J.C., N.J. 07307. Be sure to include your return address so that your membership card can be sent to you. Better yet, bring it in person to our next meeting, Friday, March 13th at the Harbor View Health Care Center.

MARCH...

March winds are upon us,
Spring is in the air,
Wearing of the green St. Patrick's Day.
And let's not forget St. Joseph on March 19th.
Preparing for RNA's Annual Flea Market.
HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY EVERYONE!

Madeline D. Rea

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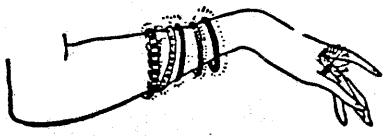

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COME VOTE FOR RNA OFFICERS AT OUR
NEXT MEETING ON FRIDAY, MARCH 13TH,
AT 7:30 P.M.

FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

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Dennis Elgrim
Sgt. at Arms

Theodore Conrad
Historical Advisor

COMMITTEES:

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
Hank Cesari

ENVIRONMENT
Ann Hart

FLEA MARKET
Margaret McCorry

VOTE FOR RNA OFFICERS

The Annual Election of RNA officers will be held at the end of the March 13th meeting.

Nominations, opened at the Feb. meeting will continue to be accepted during the March meeting. They are :

Chairperson	Maria Tuzzo
Vice-Chair	Marie Lannie
	Hank Cesari
Secretary	Kathy Brennan
	Margaret McCorry
Treasurer	Jack Rea
Sgt. at Arms	Dennis Elgrim
	Ernest Quintero

Please make every effort to attend this meeting and participate in our electoral process. Any official member who lives within in the boundaries of the organization can run for office or nominate another person. Only those members who have paid their annual dues ($3.00) for 1992 may hold office or vote in the March election.

Your chance to make a difference in your neighborhood and ultimately your city starts here at the RNA..